National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Date: 6/15/06

Place: Boston, MA

Person Interviewed: Deckhand Peter Noonan

Interview Conducted By: Brian Curtis, NTSB
Liam Larue, NTSB
Jay Spence, MBL
Lt. Cahli Carothers, USCG

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Noonan was interviewed regarding the 6/12/06 fire on the Massachusetts. The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation, but a summary of the recorded interview. Interview was conducted at USCG Sector Boston. The interview was conducted at USCG Sector Boston.

INTERVIEW

- lower deck deckhand
- worked for MBL approx. 8 months
- previous maritime background limited to recreational boating
- previous background was in landscaping
- had walk through before starting job, including emergency equipment, life preservers, lifeboats, engine room, and securing fuel oil in an emergency
- soon upon starting job had taken part in man overboard drills both with capt and for CG
- watched safety videos
- man overboard drill was the only one he has taken part in
- Accident events
  - left at 1600
  - all seemed normal

- as they approached Long Island bridge capt came to main deck, telling him there was engine smoke
  - capt told him to move pax to upper deck, and make them aware of situation
  - pax orderly went up to upper deck
  - capt announced over PA that there was a fire in engine room, and the pax would be evacuated to Laura, which was nearby
  - capt instructed him to get pax in lifejackets, and then head to bow to standby to drop anchor
  - assisted mate in dropping anchor, other deckhand was inside the vessel
  - Laura pulled up, capt and Mate handled lines in typing up Laura
  - both boats had same threshold height
  - went back and reassured pax that everything would be alright
  - pax then escorted to Laura
  - all pax had their lifejackets on
  - Laura was on starboard side
  - no gap between vessels, easy crossover
  - Laura departed once pax boarded
  - Laura gave them a couple of extra extinguishers
  - he knew where to locate all extinguishers on the vessel
  - capt gathered crew, and decided to not open hatch and fight fire
  - notified by CG, crew should get off vessel at that time
  - all crew got off of Massachusetts on Quincy police boat
  - stayed in vicinity awaiting fire boat to arrive
  - CG was onscene at that time
  - never saw flames, only smoke
  - was typical pax load for that run, peak runs from 5-7 pm can have loads up to 150 pax
- Duties include deckhand responsibilities on lower deck, taking care of pax, someone to approach
- Handles lines, serves coffee at lower deck galley
- checks engine room once during run.
- checks engines, gauges, or anything that may not be right
- usually check engine room at Long Island bridge
- notifies bridge after checking engine room, regardless of what he finds
- calls from lower deck phone at bar
- only checks engine spaces
- nothing unusual that day in engine room
- space forward of engine space is called "silver space". tools are kept there, besides extra coffee, etc.
- generally pax do not go to that space
- was aware of maintenance being done day of accident, but nothing beyond that. did not know what they were doing
- didn't see smoke until capt brought it to his attention, said delia saw it first
- pax were very orderly, calm during event
- no kids on the vessel during the accident
- his schedule is M/W/F from 0600-1845

- hadn't been involved in onboard fire drill since working there
- took pax count coming onboard
- uses counter, hung by door
- doesn't know if pax were counting leaving vessel
- before leaving vessel, crew made round of vessel of all spaces
- he checked bathrooms
- made rounds before CG requested they leave vessel
- there are 1 bathroom on upper deck, and 3 on lower deck
- he checked all of them
- no pa speaker in bathrooms
- visibility on main deck was good, no choking or coughing
- silver room doesn't have a lock
- once he gets pax count, he takes it to wheelhouse, and enters it in "book"
- also notifies capt of pax count

END OF INTERVIEW